

# A VISION FOR HOPKINTON'S FUTURE

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The Hopkinton Master Plan was created as a living document that articulates the vision, desires, and concerns of the community. It serves as a road map for the future, outlining where the Town is and where it wants to go as a community in Central New Hampshire. This Plan describes Hopkinton today and forecasts the shared vision for the future. Most importantly, it defines what the Town will need to do over the next several years to shape the community's future.

This Plan provides recommendations on ways to maintain or improve the features of the community and aims to serve as a blueprint for all future activities of Hopkinton. This Plan can help support economic development efforts, amendments to land use regulations, environmental and historic preservation efforts, expansion of community facilities and services, transportation enhancements, and much more over the next several years.

A Master Plan is intended to be the device that supports the creation, interpretation, and implementation of laws and procedures which give shape and direction to the community. A Master Plan's purpose and description are outlined by the New Hampshire statute (RSA 674:2), but it has no force of law and no way to generate the resources required for implementation. The Master Plan can be a powerful tool to help shape a community by giving suggested direction to appointed and elected officials' decision-making. However, the true power of the document is derived from the citizenry, who ultimately approves the staffing, funding, regulatory alternatives, and strategies identified by this Plan.



## COMMUNITY INPUT

Throughout the development of this Master Plan, engaging residents and other community stakeholders was a necessity. The Visioning Session and the Community Survey provided the Planning Board with important information on residents' opinions on many topics related to Hopkinton's land use, housing, transportation, natural resources, community facilities, economic development, and many other priorities and concerns. The following describes some broad themes based on public outreach and stakeholder input.

Overall, residents greatly appreciate Hopkinton's rural and historical character, its wide array of natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities, and a strong sense of community. Residents highly value the Town's two historic villages, Hopkinton and Contoocook, and support continued revitalization efforts in these areas.

Despite the great appreciation of Hopkinton's rural atmosphere and interest in retaining that character, there are strong concerns about the Town's high tax rate. Continuing to develop the commercial tax base and supporting mixed uses in the villages are priorities to help reduce the residential tax rates.

The community supports growth and development in focused places such as the area of Exit 6 on I-89, West Hopkinton along NH 127 (Maple Street) to the north of US 202/NH 9, and Contoocook Village. Targeting areas for expansion retains the existing rural areas of the Town while still developing community features. Additionally, new residential developments should fit within the character of Hopkinton, using techniques such as conservation and open space developments, repurposing of larger existing homes

into multi-family housing, and the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) with single family homes.

Residents are highly concerned for their safety at the intersection of US 202, NH 9, and NH 127 at the Henniker and Hopkinton town lines. Several other intersections and road segments including Briar Hill Road, Hatfield Road, Clement Hill Road, and Kearsarge Road were also mentioned as safety concerns. There is support for the consideration of pedestrians and bicyclists within the Town's transportation networks.



## THE VISION

The vision for Hopkinton's future is crafted from what residents and community stakeholders value about the Town today and what they hope to see in the Town for the future:

*Hopkinton should continue to be a vibrant community that prides itself on its rural atmosphere, historical character, and sense of community.*

*Ensure that appropriate commercial development is focused in key areas in the I-89 Exit 6 area, West Hopkinton along Maple Street, and through revitalization in Contoocook Village.*

*Encourage preservation and protection of natural resources, scenic views, and open spaces while encouraging recreational opportunities.*

*Support well-maintained roadways and ample space for bicycles, greenways, trails, and walkways; provide safe and efficient travel for all modes of transportation.*

*Provide a range of housing options, including affordable single-family homes, multi-family homes, and Accessory Dwelling Units that blend with the historic character and are available to accommodate residents of all ages.*

*Ensure that Town services and facilities contribute to residents' high quality of life and continue to make Hopkinton a desirable place to live, work, and play.*

## Regional Concerns

Hopkinton can benefit from working in a regional effort in many areas including population and housing growth, transportation improvements, natural resource protection, and watershed management.

Partnering with neighboring communities can cultivate strong momentum for projects that benefit Hopkinton and the surrounding region.

Wildlife corridors and habitat, natural ecosystems, waterbodies, and trail systems transcend municipal borders. Broader approaches are required in successful protection and enhancement efforts.

Many Hopkinton residents travel out of town for work and daily services. Ensuring all modes of transportation safely reach beyond the town is essential for future success.

Chapters in this Master Plan discuss regional issues with the vision that collaborating regionally has the potential to achieve many important synergies and shared benefits.

## HOW TO ACHIEVE THE VISION

The following objectives are derived from each of the Master Plan's chapters. They reflect the long-term direction for Hopkinton's future as a thriving community:

- Continue to support a mix of housing density types that fit the historic character of Hopkinton.
- Promote the use of conservation subdivisions where they are appropriate and can be implemented.
- Encourage the development of a range of housing, including single-family homes, that are affordable and accommodating to seniors and younger families.
- Improve the development process using incentives and streamlined regulations, including simplified application procedures.
- Proactively examine options to improve infrastructure and implement economic development tools to foster sustainable economic growth and improve Hopkinton's quality of life.
- Support appropriate commercial and mixed-use development for suitable and targeted areas of Town.
- Maintain the existing transportation system while implementing improvements to strengthen the network and prioritize safety for all modes of transportation.
- Respect and protect valuable natural resources while encouraging recreational activities in suitable areas.
- Actively expand and strengthen the greenway system while

stewarding the existing trails in Town and attaining regional connections where appropriate.

- Encourage the protection of open space through land acquisition and conservation easements to protect critical habitats.

